What is claimed:

1. A method for reducing ß-cell dysfunction in an individual with a pancreatic disorder, comprising:

(a) introducing a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of IL-1 β into a β cell; and

(b) transplanting the β cell of step (a) into the idividual so as to reduce β cell dysfunction.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an NF-kß inhibitor.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an insulin like growth factor-1.

5. A method for reducing Fas mediated ß-cell apoptosis in an individual with a pancreatic disorder, comprising:

(a) introducing a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis into a β cell; and

(b) transplanting the β cell of step (a) into the idividual so as to reduce β cell apoptosis.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is an dominant negative mutant of the Fas protein.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is a dominant negative mutant of the FADD protein.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the inhibitor of Fas mediated apoptosis is a member of the bcl-2 protein family.

9. A mammalian ß-cell comprising a recombinant nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule comprising and expressing an inhibitor of IL-1 β activity, wherein the expression of the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity reduces β cell dysfunction.

10. The ß-cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β activity is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.

11. The ß-cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an NF-Kß inhibitor protein.

12. The ß-cell of claim 9 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an insulin like growth factor-1 protein.

13. A recombinant viral vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule encoding an inhibitor of IL-1 β activity.

14. The recombinant viral vector of claim 13 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1 β is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist protein.

15. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1β is a NF-kß inhibitor.

16. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the inhibitor of IL-1β is an insulin like growth factor-1 protein.

17. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is

an adenovirus vector.

18. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is a lentivirus vector.

19.. The recombinant viral vector of claim 14 wherein the recombinant viral vector is a herpes simplex viral vector.